ORNITHOLOGICAL LITERATURE

MODERN BIRD STUDY. By Ludlow Griscom. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1945: 5⅛ × 7½ in., x + 190 pp., 15 photos, 10 maps and diagrams. $2.50.

"Modern Bird Study" is a fine little book, and I have read it with the greatest interest from cover to cover. It is not simply about birds; it is not simply another "What bird is that?" book; it is about avian populations and all that the words imply: the adaptability of bird populations, their migrations, the routes that they take during their travels, and their distribution. The first five chapters—Development of Field Ornithology. Capacity and Intelligence of Birds. Adaptability of Birds. Migration: Causes and Origin. Migration: Factors and Routes—"will appeal to any layman with a general interest in birds," as Griscom says in his preface; "The chapters on distribution and classification are more technical. . . . The main object of the book . . . is to show that the study of birds is not only a branch of scientific research . . . but that it also contains many topics of interest to the layman, and that the growing army of bird watchers have and can really assist the ornithologist in solving problem after problem by controlled, careful, and thorough observation."

It is a delightfully made little book, too. It fits into the pocket, and I can think of nothing better to lighten a tiresome train journey. There are 15 unusual photographs by Cruickshank, A. A. Allen, Edith Sloan Griscom, and others, as well as 10 very helpful maps and diagrams. Useful references are given at the end of each chapter, and there is an adequate index. At first sight the text may seem short, but it is as packed with meat as the proverbial nut.

Of course, it is the part concerning distribution that interests me most, and the analysis here is really first rate. I was extremely interested to find that Griscom is much more sympathetic to J. A. Allen's postulates concerning North American geographical distribution than to C. H. Merriam's. In the chapter on classification, there is an excellent analysis of the question of superspecies and incipient species, as well as a clear, brief, easily understood discussion of sympatric and allopatric species; monotypic and polytypic species; and intergradation.

This is a hard book to review because I am tempted to give long quotations from it—which simply reiterates what I said before: it is a meaty little book. (At first sight I may seem biased because Ludlow Griscom is here at the Museum of Comparative Zoology, but I think probably it would be truer to say that I am hypercritical because the book is distinctly "up my alley.")—T. Barbour.

CHECK-LIST OF BIRDS OF THE WEST INDIES. 2nd ed. By James Bond. Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, 1945: 6 × 9 in., xiii + 182 pp., map. $2.00.

At first glance the second edition of Bond's Check-List seems not to differ greatly from the original edition (1940) that was reviewed in this journal, vol. 53, p. 40, but a careful comparison of the two reveals numerous changes. In the first place, the preface has been enlarged and the lists of extinct and vanishing species revised; to the extinct birds is added *Columba inornata wetmorei* which has not been found since 1926; on the other hand, the number of birds that Bond believes may become extinct within the next hundred years has been reduced from thirteen to six. The list of rare or local forms has been omitted entirely.

A few species, reports of whose occurrence in the West Indies are now considered doubtful, have been dropped from the Check-List, and a few recent records (e.g. *Dendrocygna bicolor* from Cuba) added. A new feature is the inclusion